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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted of 687 teachers and 768 administrators on the implementation and perceptions of Colorado's mandated certificated personnel performance evaluation system, which requires that all school districts adopt performance standards for certificated personnel and that all administrators receive training in personnel evaluation skills. The survey found that the personnel evaluation system seems well established. Essentially all teachers (96 percent) had been evaluated within the last 3 years. Nearly all administrators (94 percent) reported that they had received evaluator training. More than 90 percent of teachers and administrators said standards in their district were clear and understandable. Administrators, and to a lesser extent teachers, felt the evaluation system had helped the quality of the evaluations. Three-quarters of administrators and over half of teachers felt the system had helped improve instruction in the school. When analyzed by level of school (elementary-secondary) or district setting (urban-rural), there were few differences. Copies of the teacher and administrator questionnaire are appended. (JDD)

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ED 374 106

Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation System

Survey Report

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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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January 1994

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Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation System

Survey Report

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of the
Colorado Department of Education

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Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation System Survey Report

Abstract

Based on the results of a survey of Colorado public school teachers and principals in 1992-93, the certificated personnel performance evaluation system (Section 22-9-101 et seq. C.R.S.) is well established. Standards for teacher performance have been established in all school districts, are clear and well accepted, and are seen as improving education.

1. Background

In fall 1992 a survey was conducted of teachers and administrators on their perceptions of the certificated personnel performance evaluation system. These evaluations are required under the Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation Act (Section 22-9-101 et seq. C.R.S.), which was H.B. 1338 when it was first passed in 1984. In 1990 the Act was strengthened to require teacher performance standards in each school district. The purpose of this survey was to gain a clearer picture of the implementation and perceived value of the personnel evaluation system in Colorado. The survey focused on the 1990 amendments requiring that all school districts adopt performance standards for certificated personnel, and that all administrators receive training in personnel evaluation skills.

2. Method

A random sample of 900 teachers (one in 37) was drawn from the fall 1991 file of employed certificated personnel in Colorado. For administrators, the surveys were mailed to the principals of the 1,360 public schools in Colorado. In some cases the school administrator is the superintendent. In nine cases, the forms were filled out by an administrator other than the principal or superintendent. The survey forms were designed by the authors, with advice from the State Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation Council, which is advisory to the State Board of Education.

The survey was mailed in October, 1992. A follow-up mailing was made in January 1993.

The analysis centered around the questions:

1. Is the performance evaluation system in place, are standards clear?
2. Has evaluator training been effective?
3. Has the evaluation system helped improve schooling?
4. Do teachers and administrators differ in their perceptions?
5. Are there differences in perceived implementation by school level (elementary-middle-secondary) or by district setting (urban-rural)?

3. Response Rate

Of the 912 teacher surveys mailed, 687 (75%) were returned and useable.

Of the 1,360 administrator surveys mailed, 768 (56%) were returned and useable. In many cases one principal will serve as administrator for two or more schools, so the potential number of respondents is closer to the 1,151 principals reported in the fall employment report. This would make the response rate closer to 66 percent.

4. Description of Samples

Both the teacher respondents and administrator respondents were similar to the actual population in Colorado in school level where employed (Table 1).

Table 1
School Level

	Teachers		Administrators	
	Sample	State	Sample	State
Elementary	44.2%	49.1%	57.0%	60.7%
Middle School	19.4	21.1	17.2	18.3
High School	28.1	25.5	14.7	17.6
Multilevel	8.3	4.3	11.1	3.4

The teacher respondents had more average years of teaching experience than the average experience for the total population of teachers employed in Colorado public schools (Table 2). In the teacher sample, 12 percent reported they were probationary teachers in their district. Comparable state-wide data on administrators' experience is not available, but in the respondent sample 75 percent had been administrators for six or more years, while only nine percent had two or fewer years of administrative experience.

Table 2
Total Years of Experience

	Teachers	
Years	Sample	State
0-5	10.4%	30.0%
6-10	15.0	19.1
11+	74.6	50.9

Teachers were more likely to have stayed in the same job than administrators (Table 3). Teachers were nearly twice as likely as administrators to have six or more years experience in their current position (68% vs. 37%).

Table 3
Years in Current Position

Years	Sample Respondents Teachers	Administrators
0-2	13.4%	32.3%
3-5	19.1	30.6
6+	67.5	37.1

In both samples the urban staff responded at lower rates, the rural staff responded at higher rates (Table 4). Some of these differences may be due to individuals placing themselves into different setting categories than does the certificated personnel reporting system shown in the "State Total" columns.

Table 4
District Setting

District Setting	Respondents Teachers	Administrators	State Total Teachers	Administrators
Metro/Urban	69.3%	57.2%	77%	70%
Outlying & Recreation	19.1	24.3	17	22
Rural	11.5	18.5	6	8

5. Is the Personnel Evaluation System in Place, Are Standards Clear?

Teachers are being evaluated; 96 percent had been evaluated within the last three years (Table 5). Only four percent had not been evaluated within the last three years.

Table 5
When Last Evaluated?
(Teacher Survey was October 1992)

Year	Percent
1992-93	3.1
1991-92	65.5
1990-91	18.6
1989-90	8.7
1989 or earlier	4.1

Teachers were aware of their district teacher performance standards (92%) and felt they understood them (98%) (Table 6). Administrators and teachers were agreed the standards in their district were clear or understandable.

Table 6
Awareness of and Clarity of
Districts' Teacher Performance Standards

	Teachers: Are you aware of Standards?	Teachers: If aware, do you understand?	Administrators: Are standards clear?
Yes	91.8%	97.7	95.5%
No	8.2	2.3	4.5

Administrators tended to say their standards were clear, and had improved over time with revisions, but could still be refined. At the same time, many said they had too many standards, they were too long, too cumbersome, or too wordy. A few noted their district standards did not make clear what unsatisfactory performance was.

- "Developed by teachers, for teachers!"
- Our standards place more emphasis on "professional growth," which places a greater responsibility on the evaluatee; "evaluation is becoming a process, not an event."

6. Has Evaluator Training Been Effective?

Nearly all administrators (94%) had received evaluator training since January, 1991 (Table 7). Seven of ten teachers (71%) were aware of the requirement that administrators complete evaluator training.

Table 7
Have Administrators Completed
Evaluator Training Programs?
(Since January 1991)

	Total	Superintendents	Principals
Yes	93.6%	89.7%	94.0%
No	6.4	10.3	6.0

Half of the administrators (50%) said they would benefit from additional training in personnel evaluation. In addition, 30 percent of the teachers said they would benefit from training in personnel evaluation.

Administrators in many cases gave general comments supporting training, including annual refreshers, or on the other hand said none was needed right now because they want time to work on their new evaluation process. Both administrators and teachers frequently expressed concern about having no time, having too much to do and needing fewer responsibilities, not more. Specific training suggestions offered by several administrators include:

- Time management, efficiency in evaluations, short cuts.
- Remediation planning, working with and motivating marginal teachers, improvement plans that are positive.
- Dismissal and documentation practices.
- How to challenge the best to be better, evaluating different kinds of teachers, working with non-teaching staff (classified, psychologists, social workers).
- Training available for teachers, their roles, self evaluation, keeping anecdotal records.
- Ideas on instructional improvement and good practices which can be shared in the evaluation, such as student-teacher interactions, authentic assessment, cognitive coaching.
- Ways to work with other administrators on improving evaluation, one-on-one observation of other evaluators, feedback on the respondent's evaluation, peer sharing with other schools/districts.

Teachers had some similar training suggestions, but also had some additional views. Many reported they already had received training through holding D certificates, in masters' programs, or from CEA workshops. Others said they didn't have time for inservice, and could barely keep up with class demands now. It appeared from the comments that some districts have worked to have staff informed on details of the standards and process, and other districts have teachers with very little information about teacher evaluation standards. Some teachers noted how evaluator training would be helpful to them in working with student teachers. Training ideas suggested by teachers included:

- Self-evaluation ideas, such as looking at instruction, recording data.
- Specifics on what to be prepared for, what evaluators look at.
- How to work with colleagues, peer coaching.

Several teachers commented that they would like to see such evaluations of administrators, with teachers part of that process.

> "I would like to be part of a principal evaluation team. Principals are responsible for my evaluation, I would like to be part of theirs including setting goals for them."

Both teachers (63%) and administrators (81%) said the evaluator training had improved the district's personnel evaluation (Table 8). Newer administrators (0-2 years experience) strongly agreed that the training had improved their effectiveness as an evaluator (94 percent) compared to administrators with six or more years experience (78 percent).

Table 8
Has the Training Improved
the Quality of Evaluations?

	Teachers: "Improved Quality of Evaluations"	Administrators: "Improved My Effectiveness as an Evaluator"
Yes	63.2%	81.0%
No	36.8	19.0

Teacher comments to "has training improved the quality of evaluations in your district?" provided generally positive comments.

- Many said they'd already had a good system before the new requirements.
- Others felt the new standards had given their administrators a much clearer understanding of how to evaluate, provided tools for the evaluator, and provided for more specific feedback to the teacher.
- Aspects valued by the teachers included the focus on student learning, training in what quality instruction was, and the pre- and post-evaluation conferences.
- Cautionary comments from teachers included: too much time looking at a checklist; need training in observing instruction; process puts too much burden on just a few evaluators.
- Several teachers commented that evaluators need recent experience in teaching today's students, and that teachers should be involved (peers), not just non-teachers.

Administrators strongly agreed (95%) that their district's performance standards were helpful for the personnel evaluation process (Table 9).

Table 9
Administrators Response to:
"Are District's Teacher Performance
Standards Helpful for the Evaluations?"

Yes	94.9%
No	5.1

In comments on this question of standards helping evaluations, many said it really was still too early to tell, as the process was still in development. But many administrators felt that standards had provided clear and specific guidelines, making clear district expectations, and allowing specific feedback to teachers. At the same time many were concerned that the process was too time consuming and created more paper work.

> "Teachers know what they are being evaluated on and gear their instruction to meet the guidelines."

"For new teachers, it has provided opportunities to encourage new ideas. For veteran staff, it has helped those who want to be helped; those who don't, it won't help."

7. Has the Evaluation System Helped Improve Schooling?

There was somewhat less agreement that instruction in the school had improved as a result of the district's personnel evaluation system (Table 10). While 75 percent of administrators said instruction had improved, only 52 percent of teachers agreed.

Table 10
Has Instruction in Your School Improved
as a Result of the District's
Personnel Evaluation System?

	Teachers	Administrators
Yes	51.7%	75.0%
No	48.3	25.0

Comments by teachers on the improvement of instruction were somewhat guarded, many feeling they did not really know what instructional practices were for other teachers or whether changes had occurred. There were also many comments along the line that evaluation was an inspection process, an outside requirement, while improvement was a professional act supported by peers and the system. Frequent or typical comments included the following.

- Instruction improves when teaching staff (peers) set high standards, work on instruction and help new teachers.
- "Seems that more people are taking risks to try new things or approaches."
- It has opened discussion among teachers and between teachers and administrators, teachers feel comfortable asking for constructive criticism, staff feel accountable for quality of instruction.
- It's not the evaluation, it's understanding the performance standards and working toward standards that improves instruction.
- "As a new teacher, the feedback has been invaluable."
- Too early to tell.

On the other hand, 60 percent of the teachers said their own effectiveness as a teacher had improved as a result of the personnel evaluation process (Table 11). Professional growth and instruction were most cited as areas of improvement.

Table 11
Has Your Own Effectiveness as a Teacher Improved as a Result of the Personnel Evaluation System?

Yes	60.3%
No	39.7

What Areas Have Improved?

Instruction	28.3%
Classroom Management	24.5
Professional Growth	35.8
Other	6.5

8. Differences by School Level and District Setting

Analyses were run to see if responses varied based either on the district size and setting category or the school level of the respondent.

District settings were coded as 1 - core city/metro/urban, 2 - outlying city/town/recreation, and 3 - rural/small attendance centers.

School levels were coded as 1 - elementary school, 2 - middle level school, 3 - high school or 4 - mixed/multi-level.

Within district setting groups, there were no significant differences among teachers on responses to awareness of their district's standards, understanding of them, improvement of their effectiveness, or improvement of instruction (Table 12). That is, the proportions of teachers saying yes to these questions were essentially the same whether in urban, town or rural districts.

Table 12
Responses by District Level

School Level	Teachers: Understand Standards	Teachers: Improved Effectiveness	Administrators: Standards Are Clear	Administrators: Had Evaluator Training
Metro-Urban	89.5	60.7	94.5	95.4
Outlying	89.7	61.2	95.6	88.7
Rural	88.5	56.4	98.6	94.3

Among administrators there were more differences, with administrators from outlying towns and cities slightly less likely to have been trained since 1991 and slightly more likely to feel they would benefit from more training than either their urban or rural counterparts. There also was a tendency, at a not quite significant level, for urban administrators to be less likely to say their district's standards were clear, were helpful for evaluation, or that instruction had improved as a result of the evaluation process.

Within school level categories, the only difference for teachers was that elementary teachers were more likely to say the evaluation process had improved their effectiveness as a teacher than middle school or high school teachers (Table 13). Administrators at the middle school level were more likely to say the evaluation standards were clear and helpful, while the elementary administrators were least likely to say the standards were clear and helpful.

Table 13
Responses by School Level

School Level	Teachers: Understand Standards	Teachers: Improved Effectiveness	Administrators: Standards Are Clear	Administrators: Had Evaluator Training
Elementary	90.2	65.1	93.7	94.5
Middle	85.6	62.6	99.2	95.3
Secondary	90.9	53.7	96.3	87.2
Multilevel	89.5	51.8	97.1	94.3

Overall, these setting and level results indicated there were few and mostly small differences among teachers or among administrators based on school level in which working or category of district as rural-urban. Only 2 of 20 comparisons were significant at a probability level of .05 or smaller. The responses were essentially similar across the state and across school levels.

9. Summary

All principals and a random sample of teachers in Colorado public schools were surveyed in fall and winter 1992-93 by the Professional Education Unit of the Colorado Department of Education. Responses were analyzed from 687 teachers and 768 administrators.

The personnel evaluation system seems well established. Essentially all teachers (96%) had been evaluated within the last three years. Nearly all administrators (94%), reported they had received evaluator training. More than 90 percent of teachers and administrators said standards in their district were clear and understandable.

Administrators, and to a lesser extent teachers, felt the evaluation system had helped the quality of the evaluations. When asked if the evaluation system had helped improve instruction in the school, 75 percent of administrators and 52 percent of teachers said "yes!" Even more teachers (60%) said their own effectiveness had improved as a result of the personal evaluation system.

When analyzed by level of school (elementary-secondary) or district setting (urban-rural), there were few differences. The responses were essentially similar across the state.

Standards for teacher performance have been established in Colorado school districts, are well accepted, and are seen as improving education.

Appendix

Teacher questionnaire

Administrator questionnaire

Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation System Questionnaire
Teacher Form: CDE-560, October, 1992

The State Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation Council, advisory to the State Board of Education, is assessing the impact of Colorado's mandate in 1990 requiring that all school districts adopt performance standards for certificated personnel and that all administrators receive training in personnel evaluation skills.

Please assist us by indicating for each question the best answer and including any comments you wish. A stamped, pre-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning the questionnaire. If you have any questions, please call Carol Ruckel, Office of Professional Services, CDE, at 866-6848. Thank you!

N = 687

1. How many years have you been teaching? (Pre-K through 12th grade, in Colorado or other States)
Percents (1) 2.9% 0-2 years (2) 7.4% 3-5 years (3) 15.0% 6-10 years (4) 74.6% 11+ years

2. How many years have you held your current teaching position?
(1) 13.4 0-2 years (2) 19.1 3-5 years (3) 25.3 6-10 years (4) 42.2 11+ years

3. Please indicate your status:
12.1 Probationary teacher 87.9 Non-probationary teacher

4. Please indicate the setting category of your school district (see attached list):
6.1 (1) Core City (Denver)
28.9 (2) Denver Metro
34.3 (3) Urban-suburban
7.7 (4) Outlying City
7.9 (5) Outlying Town
10.7 (6) Rural
3.5 (7) Recreational
0.9 (8) Small Attendance

5. What grade level do you teach (check all that apply)?
(1) 48.8 elementary (2) 27.1 jr. high/middle (3) 33.3 high school

6. Were you evaluated during the '91-92 school year?
64.1 Yes 35.9 No

7. If you were not evaluated last year, when were you last evaluated?
School year: _____
90-91 18.3%
89-90 8.6
88-89 2.9
Earlier 1.2

8. Are you aware of your district's current performance standards for teachers?
91.8 Yes 8.2 No

OVER

Percents

9. Do you understand your district's teacher performance standards?
89.5 Yes 4.0 No 6.5 Not aware of them

Comments: Excluding "Not Aware," Yes=97.7% No=2.3%

10. Has your district's personnel evaluation process improved your effectiveness as a teacher?
60.3 Yes 39.7 No

Example:
28.3 Instruction
24.5 Classroom Management
35.8 Professional Growth
6.5 Other

11. Has instruction in your school improved as a result of your district's personnel evaluation system?
51.7 Yes 48.3 No

Example:

12. Are you aware of the requirement that all administrators complete an evaluator training program?
70.8 Yes 29.2 No

13. If *yes*, do you think that this training has improved the quality of evaluations done by administrators in your district?
63.2 Yes 36.8 No

Example:

14. Would you benefit from training in personnel evaluation?
38.0 Yes 62.0 No

If so, please describe what you would like to learn:

Thank you for your comments. Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed pre-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Carol Ruckel
Office of Professional Services
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax
Denver CO 80203

Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation System Questionnaire

Administrator Form: CDE-561, October, 1992

The State Certificated Personnel Performance Evaluation Council, advisory to the State Board of Education, is assessing the effectiveness of Colorado's mandate in 1990 that all school districts adopt performance standards for certificated personnel and that all administrators receive training in personnel evaluation skills.

Please assist us by indicating your answer for each question and including any comments you wish. A stamped, pre-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning the questionnaire. If you have any questions, please call Carol Ruckel, Office of Professional Services, CDE, at 866-6848. Thank you!

Percents N=768

1. Which of the following best describes your position?
   - 3.8 (1) Superintendent
   - 0.3 (2) Assistant or associate superintendent
   - 0.1 (3) District-level director, assistant director or supervisor
   - 0.3 (4) Other district level administrator, please specify:_____
   - 95.3 (5) Principal
   - 0.1 (6) Assistant principal
   - 0 (7) Building level director, assistant director or supervisor
   - 0.1 (8) Other building-level administrator, please specify:_____

2. How long have you been an educational administrator?
   (1) 8.6 0-2 years (2) 16.6 3-5 years (3) 74.8 6 or more years

3. How long have you been in your current administrative position?
   (1) 32.3 0-2 years (2) 30.6 3-5 years (3) 37.0 6 or more years

4. What is the grade level of your current assignment? (check all that apply)
   (1) 62.8 Elementary (2) 27.0 Jr. High/Middle (3) 23.0 High School (4) 4.6 Other (Specify)____

5. What certificated positions do you evaluate (mark all that apply)?
   - (1) 98.6 Teachers
   - (2) 25.4 Building Administrators
   - (3) 1.7 Central Administrators
   - (4) 0.7 Do not evaluate certificated personnel

6. Please indicate the setting category of your school district (see attached list):
   - 5.5 % (1) Core City (Denver)
   - 21.7 (2) Denver Metro
   - 30.0 (3) Urban-suburban
   - 9.1 (4) Outlying City
   - 12.0 (5) Outlying Town
   - 15.3 (6) Rural
   - 3.1 (7) Recreational
   - 3.3 (8) Small Attendance

OVER

CDE - DARU FORM CLEARANCE RECOMMENDED
FORM NO. CDE-561
UNIT Office of Professional Services
APPROVAL through August 1993

Percents

7. Have you completed an Evaluator Training program since January 1991?
93.6 Yes 6.4 No

8. If *yes*, has Evaluator Training improved your effectiveness as a personnel evaluator?
81.0 Yes 19.0 No ____Not applicable

Examples:

9. Would you benefit from additional training in personnel evaluation?
49.3 Yes 50.2 No

If Yes, please describe what would be beneficial:

10. Are your district's performance standards for teachers clear?
95.5 Yes 4.5 No

Comments:

11. Are your district's teacher performance standards helpful for purposes of evaluation?
94.9 Yes 5.1 No

Examples:

12. Has instruction improved as a result of your district's personnel evaluation process?
75.0 Yes 25.0 No

If Yes, please describe how instruction has improved:

Thank you for your comments. Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed pre-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Carol Ruckel
Office of Professional Services
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax
Denver, CO 80203